

DIVISION OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
OFFICE OF PROGRAM SERVICES  
PROGRAM PROFILE

## Problem Gambling Program

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**Who Can I Contact At DBHR For More Information?**

**Primary Contact Information:**    **Linda Graves**  
Problem Gambling Program Manager  
(360) 725-3813  
[gravell@wa.dshs.gov](mailto:gravell@wa.dshs.gov)

**Alternate Contact Information:**

**What Is The Problem Gambling Program?**

The primary goals of this program are prevention and treatment for problem gambling. The program provides counseling assistance to families affected by problem gambling. The program assists individuals in gambling cessation, reduces family disruption and related financial problems, and helps in prevention of neglect, bankruptcies, and social costs of problem gambling. Problem gambling treatment mitigates the effects of problem gambling on the family system and helps families remain economically self-sufficient without requiring assistance from other state programs.

Engrossed House Bill 1031 and the resulting RCW 43.20A.890 called for a two-fold program of treatment and prevention. Prevention initiatives have included 24-hour, seven-day-a-week, live voice response helpline; public service announcements; public relations initiative to highlight problem gambling recovery stories; targeted advertising to impact high risk populations; advertising, poster and brochure distribution; and other prevention activities.

**What Populations Are Served/ Who Is Eligible For These Services?**

Outpatient treatment services are provided for problem gamblers and their families. Services are available to those who are amenable to treatment and who cannot afford to pay for treatment themselves.

**How Many People Are Served During The Biennium?**

During the second biennium of the Problem Gambling Program (2008-09) 830 clients were admitted to problem gambling treatment.

**What Is The Biennial Funding Amount and Source(s)?**

During the second biennium of the program, funds decreased to an allotment of \$729,000 for the first year and \$716,000 for the second year. There was one tribal donation received for \$10,000. This required that the budget was decreased from the former biennium, with cuts in public awareness and prevention budgets.

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Tribal donations this biennium through early January 2010 are \$60,000. Allotments are \$729,000 and \$730,000, for 2010 and 2011 respectively.

**What Would Be The Impact If This Program Was No Longer Available?**

Without treatment services for those suffering from problem gambling, more persons and families would suffer multiple problems including having to access welfare, medical benefits, food closets and other services to address their basic needs. The ramifications of untreated gambling addiction are myriad. Not only would the state see families fragmented and in need of assistance for basic needs, but there would be more legal issues including bankruptcy, forgery, embezzlement, fraud, and identity theft. Problem gambling affects a person's employment, health, family, benevolent giving, likelihood of committing illegal acts, mental health, and likelihood of engaging in other addictive behaviors. The effects on the children in such a family system can create lifelong problems. Some of these problems include not learning acceptable cultural mores like truthfulness, ability to handle money, responsible work ethic, attachment and relationship issues, ability to make and keep friendships, and many more. Suicide is higher among problem and pathological gamblers than any other addiction type.

**What Agencies Collaborate With DBHR To Deliver These Services?**

Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling is an active partner and contractor for problem gambling prevention and training services. Members of the Problem Gambling Advisory Committee, many of whom are stakeholders from gambling venues, distribute materials to each of their representative organizations. Participating treatment agencies network with other community partners, businesses, and social service agencies to provide education about treatment availability. Treatment services are offered by chemical dependency and mental health agencies, as well as sole proprietors who are certified in problem gambling treatment.

**What Are The Sources For Program Data or More Information?**

Contact Linda Graves, Problem Gambling Program Manager, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, Department of Social and Health Services, State of Washington, at 360-725-3813.